

DUTY STATEMENT

Interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention

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The National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention (National Commissioner) is being established by the Australian Government to:

- inquire into the circumstances of Australian Defence Force (ADF) member and veteran deaths by suicide
- make finding and recommendations following such inquiries; and
- to promote understanding of suicide risks for ADF member and veterans and improving the wellbeing of defence members and veterans.

The National Commissioner will be an independent statutory office holder appointed by the Governor-General under the National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention Act (pending the passage of the Bill through Parliament).

The Interim National Commissioner is being appointed by the Australian Government pending the passage of legislation and formal appointment of a National Commissioner as outlined above.

The Interim National Commissioner will be assisted in their role by staff from the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department who will form the staff of the Office of the National Commissioner, including an Official Secretary, who will support the Interim National Commissioner in the execution of their role.

It is expected that the Interim National Commissioner will:

- conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the APS Values and Code of Conduct; and
- acquire and maintain an Australian Government security clearance.

Responsibilities

The key duties of the Interim National Commissioner (and subsequently the National Commissioner) include:

Executing the functions and powers of the Office of the National Commissioner

Examining ADF member and veteran deaths by suicide, in order to support the prevention of future such deaths, including by:

- Engaging with stakeholders through formal and informal mechanisms
- Ensuring the application of a trauma-informed and restorative approach to the work
- Commencing the Independent Review of Past Defence and Veteran Suicides (detailed below).

Engaging with families and others directly affected in a trauma informed and restorative way

Ensuring the interests and needs of families and others closely affected by ADF member and veteran deaths by suicide at the core of policies, procedure and practice, including by:

- Ensuring a trauma-informed and restorative approach
- Closely and effectively engaging with families, ADF members, veterans and others affected by ADF member or veteran deaths by suicide, recognising the unique contribution they have to make to properly understanding, and addressing, member and veteran suicide deaths
- Engaging, as appropriate, with ADF members or veterans with a lived experience of suicidality or attempted suicide, recognising the unique contribution they have to make to properly understanding the factors relevant to ADF member and veteran suicide deaths; and
- Supporting a trauma informed 'no wrong door' approach for families engaging with both coronial processes and the Office of the National Commissioner; and
- Appropriately taking into account the contribution of families, ADF members, veterans and others closely affected when setting inquiry agendas and making recommendations.

Fostering productive working relationships

Actively developing and fostering productive working relationships with:

- Families, ADF members and veterans and those with lived experience as outlined above
- Representative groups within the veteran community, including ex-service organisations and support groups
- Commonwealth mental health advisors including the National Mental Health Commissioner, Suicide Prevention Advisor, and Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Mental Health
- Relevant health and wellbeing service providers, including Open Arms
- The Veteran Family Advocate to ensure that findings and recommendations are rapidly translated into action to mitigate risks factors associated with the Department of Veterans' Affairs service delivery
- Research and expert bodies such as the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
- State and territory Coroners and the National Coronial Centre to enhance reciprocal insights and learnings to support the prevention of further ADF member and veteran deaths by suicide; and
- Commonwealth agencies who have a role in the experiences of ADF members and veterans, or the investigation of their deaths, including the Department of Veterans' Affairs, the Department of Defence, the Inspector-General of the Australia Defence Force (IGADF), Comcare, and the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

Conducting the Independent Review of Past Defence and Veteran Suicides

Conducting an Independent Review of Past Defence and Veteran Suicides examining historical defence member and veterans deaths by suicide in accordance with the Terms of Reference provided by Government, including:

- Gathering and analysing information to understand the systemic issues and risk and protective factors for suicide among ADF members and veteran communities which may include seeking public submissions, conducting hearings (pending the passage of legislation) and round tables, commissioning research and engaging with experts, families and those with lived experience
- Collaborating with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care who are undertaking data analysis and research to support the Independent Review
- Formulating recommendations and advice to Government including more tailored and effective strategies to help prevent further ADF member and veteran deaths by suicide; and
- Delivering an interim and final report to Government, within 12 and 18 months respectively.

CONDITIONS FOR THE POSITION

The position is available for immediate commencement until a permanent National Commissioner appointment is made following the passage of legislation.

Remuneration

s 47E(c) Remuneration for the permanent National Commissioner will be set by the Remuneration Tribunal, 47E (c), 47F(1)

Remuneration for the Interim National Commissioner is to be negotiated with the candidate accordingly (including arrangements as to superannuation, leave and allowances).

Office location

This is a Canberra based role. The Office of the National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention is in Barton, Canberra. Relocation allowance would be available if interstate relocation was required.

s 47E(c)

Registration to work with vulnerable people is also required.